Iron County Register.

Mack Marsden's Gang.

A brief history of the Marsden gang (which gang has been the source of much trouble to a great many of the people of Jefferson county for some time past) is given below, and is taken from the St. Louis *Evening Chronicle*. Mack Marsden will be tried for murder at a special term of the Jefferson County Circuit Court, to be held on the second Monday in July. And Mack Marsden and Allen Hensly and others have been indicted for hog stealing; and if the former escapes conviction of murder at the special term, he with the others will be tried for stealing hogs at the next regular term of court; but if Mack is convicted of the higher crime, only the other men will be tried for hog stealing. Well, the following is the history of the gang, in brief: Mack is about thirty-five years old and is a native of Jefferson county, where his old white-haired father is a respected citizen. Mack, himself, is absolutely fearless, possessed of great trength and activity, and always ready to accommodate any one desiring a little exercise in either a wrestling match, foot race or thumping match. He enjoys the reputation, moreover, of being a fine marksman. Till recently he has been considered all right: but one night, over a year ago, the shanty of an old bachelor farmer named Vail was discovered in flames, and when the neighbors put the fire out the old man was found murdered. The next day it was learned that Mack Marsden had visited the old man that night, and he said that he had paid Vail $90. His theory was that the thieves had witnessed the payment through a window, and had entered and robbed the old man and fired the building. Other people who heard the theory apparently accepted it as plausible, but one day not long after the Vail murder Mack Marsden called at the store of Joe Yeager, whose place was at a little settlement called Antonia, or Bull Town. Yeager and he were good friends. In order to pay for some purchase Marsden laid on the counter a $5 bill which was torn and patched in a very odd way. On seeing the bill Yaeger became excited, as he recognized it as a bill which formed part of a sum of money he paid to Vail the day before he was murdered. Never suspecting Marsden, he inquired where he got that bill, telling him why he inquired, and saying he felt sure that it would solve the Vail murder mystery. Marsden made a statement as to where it came from, and soon after departed. Yeager told some of his friends of the discovery. Either that night or the next, Yeager's store was fired from the outside, and when he ran out to pump water some unknown assassin, behind a blacksmith shop across the road, fired a charge of buckshot that killed him instantly.

All through this period the farmers in the north end of Jefferson county had been losing their best hogs, and after a long investigation they located a drove, made up entirely of stolen hogs, with a Carondelet butcher, and obtained indisputable proof that Mack Marsden and Allan Hensley, an associate, had sold them to a butcher. Marspen and Hensley wbre arrested, and were soon after indicted for hog-stealing in as many cases as possible. The news of this discovery went through Jefferson county like wild-fire, and then tongues long silent were loosened in a recital of the circumstances above given, connected with the Vail and Yeager and Vail murders. A mob spirit was engendered in these quarters, and when, soon afterward, Marsden and Hensley went before a Justice of the Peace at De Soto and waived a hearing, a big crowd of farmers were in waiting, who needed only a resolute leader to induce them to invoke Judge Lynch. About fifteen of them followed the suspected men from the Justice's office to their home, but did not shoot. The two men kept about a half a mile ahead of them till near Marsden's home, when they put spurs to their horses, dashed up to the house and obtained double-barrelled shotguns which had been heavily loaded with buckshot on the previous day in anticipation of some such emergency, and returning to a bend in the road waited for the pursuers. When the latter came up, Marsden called upon them to halt, and then ordered them to turn and go as fast as they could. They did so, and he and Hensley fired a couple of shots over their heads, causing the fifteen horsemen to put spurs to their horses and gallop madly back to Hillsboro. Since that time the barns and houses of prosecuting witnesses have been burned and several of them were obliged to get out of the country.

John Marsden, having turned State's evidence, and Moss, being brought before the Grand Jury, testified that Mack Marsden had boasted to them, before the gang grew suspicious of each other, that he had killed old man Vail. After paying Vail the money he watched his opportunity, caught him by the throat and began to strangle him, intending to get the money he had paid, together with the old man's treasure. He found Vail stronger than he had anticipated, however, and a desperate struggle ensued. Vail put his hand in his inside pocket to protect his pocket-book, and in one of the whirls his hand was jerked out and the pocket-book dropped on the floor. Vail then kicked it toward the open fireplace, and, in trying to reach it and push it into a safely remote place, Marsden found it was necessary to let go of his victim for a moment. Vail fought more desperately than ever, and then Marsden had to quiet him with uglier violence, after which he took his money, fired the house and fled.

Jefferson County Circuit Court Notes.

The Grand Jury was discharged Thursday [May 24], having had a ten-days' session. They returned twenty-nine true bills.

Mrs. Seaport, by some of the finest acting we ever saw, created a great amount of sympathy, and was finally admitted to bail in the sum of three hundred dollars, until next term. Thirteen went her security. She is indicted for perjury.

Fruin & Swift, contractors, vs. the Crystal City Railroad Co. The jury gave plaintiffs a verdict for $12,333,43 over and above all offsets. The trial of this case was a fine display of legal ability, with Mr. Wood and Dinning and Byrnes for plaintiff and Messrs. Hitchcock and Allen for defendants.

The application of Mack Marsden and Allen Hensley for change of venue was heard Saturday. Nearly forty witnesses were sworn and required to testify as to whether or not the people generally thought the prisoner guilty. They did not attempt to show by witnesses that prejudice existed to such an extent that defendants could not get a fair trial. As only one side of the case has been heard by the people, it is not strange that most of those who had any opinion at all thought the defendants guilty; but the evidence disclosed the fact that the only feeling the general public has in the matter is, that the guilty ought to be punished and that the evidence must be heard before it can be determined who is guilty. After hearing all the evidence, Judge Emerson refused to grant the change of venue, and a special term of court was fixed for the ninth of July to try the cases.

Allen Hensley's bail was reduced to one thousand dollars, for both causes against him, but he has not yet given bond.

Philip Loos tried to break a brother shoemaker's head with a piece of wood, and was fined seventy-five dollars for the offense by 'Squire Goff. He was taken before Judge Emerson on a writ of habeas corpus, but the Judge refused to reduce his fine, and remanded him to jail until it is paid.

Only the murder case against Marsden is to be tried next July. A special venire of one hundred men has been ordered. The hog-stealing cases have been continued till next regular term.—*Hillsboro Jefferson Democrat.*

Judge Langdon has received a letter from Chas. P. Cheauteau in regard to a proposition made him by the County Court of Dunklin county for the effecting of a compromise in the recent Cheauteau land sale. Mr. Cheauteau writes favorable to a compromise, and a special term of the County Court will be held on the 11th, when a compromise will likely be arranged.

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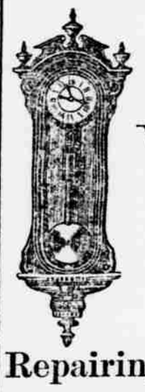

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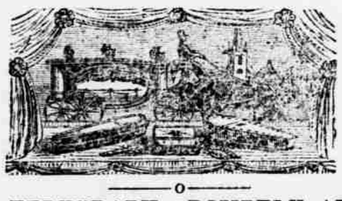

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